


Unkans

The newsletter of the Shetland Museum and Archives
and the Shetland heritage community

FREE

January 2009
Issue 12

museum
Shetland
archives



Unique record of cleeps, draas, rits and holls donated

A hand-made, leather-bound book listing more than 1300 sheep and cattle lug marks for Sandwick and Cunningsburgh has been donated to the Archives.

Christopher Jamieson, who volunteered in the Archives over the summer, and his grandfather, Lollie Halcrow of Aithsetter, generously donated the book, which had been in their family for nearly 200 years. Archives' staff were delighted to receive such a rare item.

The register, which began on 12 December 1813, lists crofters, croft

names and descriptions of lug marks for sheep and cattle. Changes to lug mark ownership were added between entries and in margins.

Pages of different types of paper were added to the book as it was filled and sewn together with sailmaker's twine.

Included with the book is an order dated 13 October 1813 from Sheriff Substitute Andrew Duncan, explaining the need for such a register 'as a means of preventing and punishing crime ... and preventing disputes'.

The book is in a fragile

condition and will be taken to a conservator this month and it is expected to be back at the Archives later in the year, when it will be

available to researchers. It will be a valuable resource for those interested in genealogy, agricultural history, and place-names.

What's On Guide

January

10th Jan.-8th Feb.: 'Men in Tights'. Up Helly Aa exhibition, Da Gadderie.

16th.: Launch of SIC Dialect Songs for Schools, CD & Resource pack. 1.30pm. Join pupils from across Shetland as they sing to celebrate the launch of this new resource for schools. Open to members of the public, free, drop-in

20th: 'Men in Tights'. A talk by Dr Ian Tait on our Up Helly Aa exhibition. 1.15pm in Da Gadderie.

23rd - 28th: Gallery talk, 'The origins of Up Helly Aa', daily at 3pm, 20 minutes long. Free, drop in

24th: Up Helly Aa Shields. Come and paint your own shield for Up Helly Aa. 11am - 12noon. £3, booking essential. Primary 1-7

25th: Up Helly Aa Shields. Come and paint your own shield for Up Helly Aa. 11am - 12noon, £3, booking essential. Primary 1-7

28th: Find out about the Viking god Thor and make a Thor's hammer clay pendant. 2.30pm - 3.15pm. £3, booking essential. Primary 1-7

28th: 'Men in Tights'. A talk by Dr Ian Tait on our Up Helly Aa exhibition. 1.15pm in Da Gadderie.

February

14th Feb.-15th March: Exhibitions by local artists, Jim Tait, Bobby Robertson, Da Gadderie.

18th: Lecture on Brochs (title to be confirmed) by Brian Smith 7.30pm (doors open at 7pm). Free - but booking essential

26th: Fishy Fun! 11-12noon. Make a colourful fishy collage to take home. Free, but booking essential. Suitable for kids aged 3 and 4 years old (bring an adult!)

All events are held at the Shetland Museum and Archives and are free, unless otherwise stated. To book call 01595 695057. No booking is necessary for drop-in events.

Winter Opening Hours

Museum:

Monday-Saturday 10am-5pm, **Sunday** 12pm-5pm

Archives:

Monday-Friday 10am-4.30pm, **Saturday** 10am-1pm,
Sunday closed

Hay's Dock Café Restaurant:

Daytime: **Monday-Saturday** 10:30am-5pm,

Sunday 12pm-5pm

Evenings: **Thursday-Saturday** 7.00pm-late, last orders 9pm.

To book, phone 01595 741569

Bobby begins fishing research

A new fishing history project is underway at the NAFC Marine Centre with the appointment of Bobby Gear from Scalloway.

Bobby, who graduated from the University of St Andrews last summer, will be carrying out research on the post-war development of Shetland's pelagic fishing industry.

The main aim of the study is to provide an accurate and comprehensive record of the changes that have taken place in the industry since World War II. It will attempt to explain how and why these changes occurred, identify the factors that influenced the development of the industry, and examine the wider effects that these changes had on Shetland's fishing industry and communities.

The project will also compare the changes which occurred in Shetland's pelagic fishing industry with those seen in other areas of Scotland, and beyond.

The three-year project is being

undertaken in collaboration with Shetland Amenity Trust and the University of Hull's Centre for Maritime Historical Studies, and is being funded by Shetland Catch Ltd (through the Arthur Laursen Memorial Bursary) and Lerwick Port Authority. The research is being supervised by Dr Ian Napier (NAFC Marine Centre), Dr David Starkey (University of Hull), Dr Robb Robinson (University of Hull) and Brian Smith (Shetland Museum and Archives).

Explaining what attracted him to the study, Bobby said: "I believe this is an important project for Shetland which will examine a lot of information which hasn't been looked at before. I hope to interview fishermen active in the post-war period and record information for the Archives that otherwise would be lost forever."

Bobby can be contacted at the NAFC Marine Centre, bobby.gear@nafc.uhi.ac.uk.



Time for school

Once upon a time clocks were individually made by hand, but from the 1850s factories in New England started mass-producing them, in a range that soon expanded to many different designs. Costs were kept to a minimum through standardised components, allowing timepieces to become affordable to ordinary families on both sides of the Atlantic. What could be more Shetland than an American clock!

Householders invariably bought mantel clocks, but different models were used in offices, where wall-mounted ones were more practical. Plain round ones were popular, and visitors to the Museum displays will see one from the Boddam School. In the 1870s-80s several schools were built throughout Shetland, and a standard piece of classroom equipment was the clock, that pupils watched making its slow progress through the day.

Late 19th-century clocks are common, but ones with local markings are interesting, so we were pleased when Winnie Leask, Asta, donated one to us with an inscription. This oak wall clock with leaf and acorn decoration dates to the 1880s. Pencilled on the back is 'Quendale Public School, Dunrossness', along with a vertical line and instructions to 'Hang with this line plumb'; if a pendulum-driven clock sat squint it wouldn't run at all. The Quendale School opened in January 1882, the clock hanging in the classroom until it closed in 1969.

Dr Ian Tait
Curator of Collections

Give us a clue!



Do you know where this photograph was taken? A merchant's premises with booth or warehouse attached; the wooden building is probably a workers' barracks. It is at a whitefish station – note the salting vat and washing tub. One of the boats seems to be the Burra haddock boat Lark 2974 LK. Photographed circa 1890. Contact Ian Tait on 01595 695057, ian@shetland-museum.org.uk

Shetland could become Geopark

Shetland is making a bid to become a UNESCO European Geopark. A geopark is an area with outstanding geology that is used to promote sustainable development, mainly through tourism.

Nearly all of Highland Scotland's geology is represented in Shetland, as well as unique features such as the Shetland ophiolite, an exposed section of ancient seabed in Unst and Fetlar, and the volcanic rocks of Eshaness and Papa Stour.

To the uninitiated, Shetland's rocks and landscape are striking, but a little interpretation reveals the fascinating stories behind them. Geological walls created by local craftsmen on Fetlar and at Mavis Grind are the first of a series of

geological exhibits planned throughout Shetland. Interpretive panels have been set up to provide more detailed information at many key sites. The first of several planned trails will soon be launched, taking visitors on a self-guided tour around the stunning volcanic coastline of Eshaness.

These developments are only the start of the process of making Shetland a world class area for geotourism. For more information about geoparks, visit www.europeangeoparks.org. Our website, www.geoparkshetland.org will be launched early in 2009.

**Robina Barton, Project Officer – Geology
Shetland Amenity Trust**

COMMUNITY HERITAGE NEWS

Is your heritage group working on a special project? Why not tell us about it. Contact Carol Christiansen on 741560, carol@shetland-museum.org.uk

Heritage Hub map

Shetland Amenity Trust marketing staff have completed a draft of a large map showing the Heritage Hub. They are asking for your input into the final version. The map is located in the Museum foyer, on the wall to the right as you walk into the ground floor gallery. You will also find comments cards directly below the map.

Scotland's Rural Past

The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland has implemented a project whereby individuals and groups interested in their local history can receive training and advice toward recording historical features in their landscape. Besides fieldwork, Scotland's Rural Past also has an archival element, which can include researching historic photographs, maps, place-names and other historic documents about the rural landscape. Brochures about Scotland's Rural Past are available in the Museum foyer and in the Archives, or go to www.scotlandsruralpast.org.uk.

Free Training

Three free courses on museum documentation, including a course on numbering, labelling and marking, are available to registered/accredited museum staff. For further information or to register please email helen@collectionstrust.org.uk or telephone 01223 316028. Museums Galleries Scotland has also made money available for travel bursaries. Contact colleenp@museumsgalleries.scotland.org.uk

Remembrance display at Archives



Mrs. Hilary Harmer, niece of Karl Manson, views the exhibit with Mark Smith.

The current Archives' focus display features four young men lost in the First World War. The idea for the display came to Collections Assistant Jenny Murray as she was reading letters sent home to Shetland by soldier Laurence Thomson. The Museum collection included medals sent posthumously to Laurence and artefacts and medals belonging to other Shetland servicemen. A Glengarry hat and the personal effects of Karl Manson, son of printer Thomas Manson, were chosen as centrepieces. These items were brought back from the battlefield in France when another Shetland soldier recognised Karl's body. The display opened on Remembrance Day and will run until March.

**Mark Smith
Archives Assistant**



Derek swoops in to help

Volunteer Derek Jackson, who usually works in the Archives, spent his career as an aerospace engineer. He has been helping the Museum identify aeroplane parts in the collection.

Recently the Museum's aviation artefacts have been dusted off and reviewed, in an attempt to clarify exactly what the collection contains. Sadly, most of the artefacts are the remains of aircraft that crashed on land or at sea, often with loss of life.

The majority of the components are from the Second World War era, with a smattering of World War One items. The two aircraft from which most of the artefacts originate are the Consolidated Catalina multi-role flying boat, and the Short Sunderland, a patrol flying boat. Both of these aircraft were flown extensively from the military air base at Sullom Voe from 1939 to 1945. There are also many artefacts from the Bristol Blenheim, a light bomber.

From the same period, there are a few components from German aircraft such as the Heinkel 115, a general-purpose seaplane, the Messerschmitt 110, a twin-engine fighter and the Junkers 88, a twin-engine bomber.

It is a little unusual finding parts from Blenheim aircraft in Shetland, as the only commonality with any of the aircraft, is that some Mk's had the same Pratt & Whitney radial engine fitted, as the Catalina's. One can only presume it was a passing (or flying) visit.

There is evidence that a number of artefacts were re-used after the aircraft had crashed, for more mundane requirements on crofts or in the home. For example, fuel tanks were used as water butts and flight control levers were made into five bar gate latches. This is not surprising, when one imagines how limited basic materials were at this time in Shetland.

There are remains of the Reduction –

gear / Pitch – Control – Unit (PCU) and their associated propeller, for three Pratt & Whitney 1830 Radial engines. These probably originated from a Catalina, but unfortunately, salt water, weather and time have reduced them to a stage of non-recoverability.

First World War artefacts are limited, but appear also to come from a seaplane, the Felixstowe F2A. The lack of components is not surprising, as these aircraft were last flown about 88 years ago. Excluding the engine, they were made primarily from wood, so having any surviving artefacts is a plus.

In almost every case local people have donated the artefacts over the years. It seems likely that out and about in Shetland, in garden sheds and attics, there could be many more aviation artefacts. These are probably slowly rusting and corroding, but have, by their history and design, a story to tell and a need to be looked after.

This page is dedicated to research on all aspects of Shetland's history and heritage. Contributions are welcome.

Get in touch

We are keen to include contributions from anyone who has something interesting to share about Shetland's heritage.

If you would like to stock our newsletter or distribute copies to your group, let us know.

Email: info@shetlandmuseumandarchives.org.uk Telephone: 01595 695057 Fax: 01595 696729

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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE IS 13 FEBRUARY 2009